



# KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CENTER FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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KANSAS MUSEUM OF HISTORY

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## Certification of State Register Listing

The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: Bixby House 113-3430-0008

Address: 321 South Maple, McPherson, Kansas 67460

County: McPherson County

Legal: Lots 13 and 14, Block 103 OTS McPherson

Owner: Carmella Snyder

Address: 321 South Maple, McPherson, Kansas 67460

National Register eligible \_\_\_\_\_

State Register eligible X

This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on May 2, 1992.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Ramon Power  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 5/6/92

The Bixby House (c. 1879) is being nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places for its historical association with the growth and development of McPherson, McPherson County, Kansas (pop. 26,855). The property is located at 321 South Maple.

The town of McPherson was platted in 1872, McPherson was incorporated as a third class city in 1874. In 1883 the population of the community had reached 2,000. Andreas describes McPherson as "one of the most flourishing towns in Central Kansas. It is the center of trade of an unrivalled agricultural country, settled by an industrious and intelligent class of people, many of whom are foreign by birth. It has railroad connections from the north over the Salina and Southwestern road, a branch of the Kansas Pacific. The Marion and McPherson branch of the A. T. & S. F. road gives it free communication east and west." (Andreas, 1883, p. 813).

The Bixby House was constructed for Dr. J. W. Charles in 1879. Charles sold the house to Henry Harrison Bixby in 1883, and the house remained in the Bixby family until 1990. The house stands on the original part of the town of McPherson, several blocks south of the McPherson County Courthouse.

Henry Harrison Bixby (1853-1933), an Illinois native, settled in McPherson in 1877. He established Bixby Brothers Drugs with his brother Dr. A. W. Bixby, in 1879. This business was sold in 1882. Bixby acquired half an interest in a drug store with Dr. N. H. Morrison in 1883, naming the concern H. H. Bixby and Company. He later acquired full interest in the business; in 1887 he became partners with S. W. Lindsay, this partnership survived until Bixby's death in 1933. In 1918, Louis Bixby, Henry's eldest son, purchased a third interest in the company and added jewelry to the drugstore's inventory. The company was renamed Bixby, Lindsay and Company with Louis' interest.

Henry married Mary Parker (1853-1836) in 1883. Mary Parker graduated from Illinois State Normal School in 1879, and taught school in the years before her marriage to Henry. The couple had three children: Louis Edmond (1885-1952), Benjamin Parker (1893-1962), and Abigail Cornelia (1895-1990). Mary established a kindergarten in her home with Mrs. Earl after Louis was born. Always interested in education, she was the first woman to serve on McPherson's board of education. She helped to establish McPherson's public library and served as its president.

Louis Bixby received a degree in Pharmacy from the University of Kansas and after a period of travel, returned to McPherson to join his father in business. Benjamin Bixby received a degree in Medicine and practiced in Valley Center for many years. Abigail Bixby received a degree from the University of Kansas in 1916. After working in Kansas City and California she returned to McPherson to join Shaw Insurance Agency, she later joined the Bixby, Lindsay and Company, continuing to run the business until 1957, when it closed.

The Bixby House is a two-story, ell-shaped house made of brick. The house has received several modifications between 1890 and 1991, these have occurred to the east and south of the original building. The original rectangular house (1879) retains a western elevation, presenting a gable-front facade. Its corners are accentuated by limestone quoins. A bay window projects from the first level of the facade, this may be 1879 vintage or 1890 vintage. The 1879 window openings are rounded, the lintels are accentuated with three limestone headers. The keystone in the arch above the front doors bears the incision of the crown and cross of the Masonic Knight Templers.

The house sits on a large, treed lot. Original limestone slab sidewalks lead up the house. A garage and a shed stand behind the property to the east. The property stands in a residential neighborhood on the edge of a traditionally commerical district.

